

Lewis Tappan - Jan. 13. 1845. New York, January 13/45.

Dear Brother Phelps,

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Yours of the 7th was rec^d on the 11th. I thank you for the "bill of particulars" of the difficulties in your parish, and rejoice to learn that they have terminated so happily.

With respect to your inquiry, "How is this to affect my arrangements with you?" it is not easy to answer. My understanding of the matter is that you engaged to edit both the Reporter and the Missionary until Spring, when you were to decide definitely upon the proposition I made to you. This involved the obligation on my part of being responsible to you for your salary, \$1500 per annum, should you elect to come here, & provided my business enabled me to be at such an expenditure, with the aid I might get from other friends of the cause. After we had proceeded awhile the idea came up of your separating immediately from your parish - and devoting yourself to writing out your argument, getting up a Convention, while you continued to edit the papers. Now, it seems, you have gone back somewhat beyond the ground we stood upon last fall, and intend, if your health permits, performing your parochial duties, and aid me about the Reporter - and in getting up a Miss. Convention, &c., and do what you can in aid of the M. Missionary. Undoubtedly this is all your health allows. I would not, as a friend, advise you to do more. But I am disappointed, hoping you would separate from your parish & devote the remainder of the winter months to writing out your argument, getting up the convention, and editing the papers. In this posture of affairs let us commence a little together on the "prospect before us".

1. The Reporter. There is hardly feeling enough among abolitionists to keep up this paper. If printed once in 2 months, in single numbers, & 5000 copies, the cost of printing, mailing &c will be about \$600. At one time we had about 400 subscribers, at \$1. each. I suppose with a little effort (none has ever been used) we might raise enough to pay for paper, printing & mailing.

9. I will not be able to do this. I have been showing the friends of the Standard Association of Ministers - Warren, Washburn & others.

The question then is - ought such a paper to be kept alive? I am clearly of opinion that it ought. We want a Register of documents, ~~and~~ a paper of moderate tone that will address itself to those ~~not~~ enlisted in our cause, and that will present the American anti-slavery subject to Englishmen & other foreigners. The other anti-slavery newspapers are either Garrison papers or Liberty party papers. They do not supply the place of the Register. So large an amount of local politics does not suit European abolitionists or persons here not won over. But I can not continue to edit this paper. Had I leisure nothing would be more agreeable to me. While it was in my hands & I prepared the whole contents many spoke well of it, and yet I did not give half the time to it that would have been desirable. Even holding the position to it that I now do is, it seems & interferes too much with my other avocations. The needless news in the press has cost me more labour & anxiety than I can consistently bear. I shall not therefore be able to edit it solely now & take the responsibility I have done for some months past. There must be an editor or it must be suspended.

2. Union Messenger. This paper will cost the same as the Reporter. It has won its way very favorably. I am receiving letters weekly, stating that it is very acceptable, greatly needed, & is doing much good. This paper can be well supported if properly attended to. And the missions (Missi, St. Indians, I. Islands &c) in connection with the paper might be well sustained. But I shall not be able to edit this paper. My business requires so much of my time - my ^{private} correspondence is so extensive - my reading &c. take so much of my spare moments, that editing the paper will endanger my health.

When I look back, the past $3\frac{1}{2}$ years, and consider how much business I have done in my office, and how much attention I have paid to the Reporter, Union M., & collateral objects I am amazed that I have not broken down. Two or three times I have had "warnings," &

yet I have not taken heed to them as I should have done. Six
months since I procured a partner, intending to throw off some of the
care of business, & I did awhile until fully restored to strength. Within
a few weeks we have found a necessity of extending our business over
the whole country. Rival agencies have sprung up & unless we went ahead
we should go, astern. In this dilemma, I would have relinquished bu-
siness, and devoted myself chiefly to the Anti-S. River. claims of my property
had been sufficient to sustain my family. We resolved therefore upon en-
larging our business. My partner has gone to Va. & N.C. & we have agents
in several of the S. and S.W. States. The whole of the Slave State is cut
up into divisions, my partner having one of them, and I have the general
superintendence of the whole, North & South. Thus accumulation of busi-
ness is therefore very great. Monday, this day, we have 13 men & boys
in the office & 4 out of it, & I have to do all the correspondence & oversee
the whole concern. If we succeed in this enlarged business, & my life
is spared I may be able, in a year or two, to procure another partner who
will relieve me, and then I may be able to, have more leisure & money.

Under these circumstances you will see that it would be
tempting God for me to undertake to manage their papers, or either of
them, or to do what I could two months ago. What then shall be done?
I do not see but you ought to separate from your parish immediately,
& regret that you did not do it when you told them of my offer &c.
The interests of the Republic, U. Ministers, the Convention of the Mission are surely
of more importance than the interests of your Society or of any other Society.
If you conclude to do this, how would you employ your time? You could
find ample employment in editing both papers, and in getting up the Con-
vention, writing out your argument &c., with such help as you could get.
But you now think the miss. discussion can not be well carried on in a
paper that is the organ of a Society. It might be better to have it in another paper.
We must not attempt too much at once, nor relinquish a certain good
in hope of accomplishing something better.

Our last U. M. Editor, containing intelligence from the Board of Agents & Agents -
wondering much interest & money of flowing in. The editors of the U. M. J. Exemplary knowledge
to visit a long account of it of several papers of it. I trust it to them & they took no notice of it &
the Editor Recorder takes no notice of a copy and then.

Suppose, & you relinquish your parish or Society forthwith - 2. edit
the two papers until May - (I will write out your argument if you are able,
but to get up the Convention, and leave for future consideration what
shall be done after May. Mr. Stoddard & myself will guaranty to you what
you would derive from ~~your~~ people till May, ~~and~~ when the Convention
meets, ^{it is probable that} a new association will be formed, that you or some other person will
be the Secretary & editor. Should it be you, and the location of the Society be
either here or in New England, and you are able & willing to edit both papers
it is probable I shall be able & willing to guaranty your salary. If however
you should be indisposed to perform all this labour, or think some other
arrangement better it is probable I should be disposed to contribute an equal
amount to be appropriated as we and others in our confidence should
judge best. This is one plan. The Reporter ought to be continued, & there
ought to be a ^{min.} paper of some sort. Let us look now at another subject.

I believe it is feasible to establish here a new weekly Independent
religious newspaper. It is probable \$10,000 could be subscribed &
paid as wanted for a capital to be risked in the business, & as to the
editor & the publisher, to be interested in which or part of the profits
ever enabled them to do so. There is a great deal of Congregational
feeling hereabouts set well to work, & many of the persons concerned
are disgusted with the Observer & Evangelist, and some cordially
desire to see Anti-Slavery, & other moral reforms amply discussed.
It would be a question to those who might make up the sum, I
don't say, to have you editor. If such a paper were established it
might supersede the necessity of the Reporter & Union Merit, or monthly
paper could be made up from the weekly. That I suppose would
be your favorite plan. Could you find an associate, a man like
Benedict? Would a plan of this kind do more good than a third
Soc. & 2 papers as now conducted? Should this course be decided
upon you might suspend writing out your argument, getting up a
convention &c. Was I convinced that such an enterprise would
do more good than the other plan - viz. carrying on two monthly
papers I would heartily come into it. In this case the Societies might
exist & the min. Soc. could, when convenient, be re-modelled.

While writing part of this letter my mind has been clear on the
subject & at other times a little obscure. Perhaps I have used more words
than were necessary, but I have thought as I was writing. Look it
over, promptly, as I have done & let me speedily know how it
strikes your mind.

One thing is clear to me that you ought to leave your Society without delay & assume the burden that
more immediately rests upon you. When the responsibility actually upon you, for it is impossible for me to edit
either paper while I am thus immersed in business. It would be unwise to
hesitate. I believe you are not far from what has just been said. I believe that the best thing for
you to do is to leave your Society without delay & assume the burden that more immediately rests upon you.

"A Spinning Wheel & a Slave!"
Inedicated of the Standard Association
of Ministers - Haver, Rockwell & others.